

# Manuel Gonzalez Day

**Presented by Councilmember Vivian Moreno and  
Councilmember Monica Montgomery Steppe**

**October 19, 2021**

**WHEREAS**, Manuel Gonzalez began his experience at the City of San Diego's Parks and Recreation Department by participating in dance classes at Golden Hill, played tennis at the Balboa Tennis Club, played soccer and baseball at Morley Field, and was on the water polo and swim team at Bud Kearns Pool; **and**

**WHEREAS**, Manuel Gonzalez started with the Parks and Recreation Department on June 24, 1995 as a Pool Guard at Colina Del Sol Recreation Center, and the money he earned from his summer job at the City helped him attend St. Augustine High School and later graduate from Princeton University; **and**

**WHEREAS**, Manuel Gonzalez worked as a Recreation Center Pool Manager at Colina Del Sol, Allied Gardens and Vista Terrace before becoming the Aquatic Supervisor with the City of Chula Vista in 2006. He then returned to the City of San Diego as a District Manager on February 2, 2013, with oversight of the parks and recreation centers in the southeasternmost and southern areas of the City; **and**

**WHEREAS**, Manuel Gonzalez has been a leader in drowning prevention, serving six terms as President of the San Diego County Aquatics Council, receiving a Community Lifesaver Award from the National Drowning Prevention Alliance, and was recognized by Aquatics International as a member of the Power 25 Most Influential Aquatic Leaders, has trained hundreds of lifeguards and swim instructors, and volunteered to train more than 50 swim instructors every Memorial Day weekend since 2006; **and**

**WHEREAS**, Manuel Gonzalez has been a leader in the recreation industry, serving as President of the California Parks and Recreation Society, District 12 and the statewide Administrator's section, and was recognized by the San Diego Union Tribune as a finalist for the Latino Champions Award, has served as a presenter at regional, national, and international trade conferences; **and**

**WHEREAS**, Manuel Gonzalez has overseen the summer lunch program in partnership with two school districts and more than 40 non-profit organizations to serve more than 100,000 meals annually at 34 parks and partnered with Feeding San Diego to continue the program during the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 1.5 million meals have been served since the program started; **and**

**WHEREAS**, Manuel Gonzalez worked hard to provide more opportunities at parks and recreation centers in Council District 4 and 8, and he helped to complete 13 capital improvement projects totaling more than \$43 million in park improvements, including Cesar Solis Community Park, the new Bay Terraces Community and Senior Center, Audubon Joint Use, Virginia Ave. He has also been involved with the design of several new parks that have not been constructed, including Beyer, Riviera Del Sol, Dennery Ranch, Southwest, Hidden Trails, and the conversion of the Old San Ysidro Library to a Teen and Community Center; **and**

**WHEREAS**, Manuel Gonzalez recognized the need to engage the community during the pandemic and worked with his staff to develop a Virtual Recreation Center when parks were closed, worked with the team that introduced the new Parks & Recreation Department Instagram page, worked with the team that transitioned operations with the recreation councils, worked with the team that transitioned registration from paper to digital; **and**

**WHEREAS**, On October 1, 2021, Manuel Gonzalez will leave the City after more than 25 years of dedicated service to the City of San Diego, its residents, and visitors; **NOW, THEREFORE**

**BE IT PROCLAIMED**, by the Council of the City of San Diego, that this Council for and on behalf of the people of San Diego, does hereby proclaim **October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021** to be "**Manuel Gonzalez Day**" in the City of San Diego.